

Idaho elected officials celebrate new CAES facility

By Harold Blackman, CAES interim director

On Feb. 20, Idaho Gov. Butch Otter and the state's entire congressional delegation, along with the four partners in the Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES), gathered with Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy Dennis Spurgeon to celebrate the groundbreaking milestone for \$17 million facility in Idaho Falls.

Idaho National Laboratory and three Idaho universities have unified efforts to form CAES. Shortly after the indoor event, a 'ceremonial shoveling of earth' took place near the building's future location amid cold temperatures and breezy Idaho winds.

Idaho State University President Arthur Vailas welcomed the large crowd in the Bennion Student Union at University Place. Speaking on behalf of the three university partners - Boise State University, Idaho State University and University of Idaho - Vailas said, "This partnership creates a core resource that brings together the best intellectual capital from Idaho and the world to address many of our energy needs."

Photo: Sen. Larry Craig

The investment you make today will make Idaho a future energy producer of substantial consequence, said Sen. Larry Craig.

Photo: Sen. Mike Crapo

Noting the important symbolic and scientific significance of the new 55,000-square-foot facility, Gov. Butch Otter said, "We are planting some seeds today and for the first time you are going to see some roots grow in energy. With the opening of CAES, everyone in Idaho will become part of an energy revolution."

"The investment has nothing to do with today and everything with the future," said Sen. Larry Craig (R-Idaho). He hailed the new CAES facility, which is scheduled to be completed in June 2008. "Idaho and its future, and the investment you make today, and the interrelationship between our colleges and universities and our federal institutions, will make Idaho a future energy producer of substantial consequence."

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Sen. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) recounted, "For years, I have believed that we needed to develop a much stronger relationship between our university system and the lab (INL). This is a tremendous and exciting development. I am 100 percent behind it."

Rep. Mike Simpson (R-Idaho) spoke of the initial vision for the new INL, formed in 2005. He said, "We wanted to see a strong collaboration between the INL, which we view as a vital national resource, and our universities. This is the first step in that and in transforming the INL into a world-class national laboratory."

Noting that CAES and INL are going to play key roles, Rep. Bill Sali (R-Idaho) said, "It is so exciting with this vision for the future that is turning into a reality."

Expressing gratitude for efforts expended to get CAES started, Secretary Spurgeon said, "Special acknowledgement is deserved for the Idaho congressional delegation, led by Sen. Larry Craig, Sen. Mike Crapo and Rep. Mike Simpson, for underscoring the importance of the CAES. This bricks-and-mortar step testifies that we are dedicated to aggressively pursuing the science that will deliver energy solutions."

At a brief 'shoveling of earth' ceremony, INL Director John Grossenbacher spoke about INL employees, saying, "every day they produce high-quality science and engineering that will have a real impact in the region, nationally and internationally. This is for them and our university partners."

He was followed by DOE Idaho Manager Beth Sellers, who recalled the development of the new contract bid requirements for INL in 2005. She said, "The Center for Advanced Energy Studies was right at the top of the list that we wanted to come to fruition during the ten-year contract. It is a great pleasure today to have this actually happening."

CAES is creating a unique and collaborative environment for our energy future, including cross-organizational and peer-to-peer technical collaboration. It will address science, engineering and technology development critical to U.S. and global energy needs. CAES research will focus on energy affordability, environmental safety, and technology research in nuclear, hydrogen, fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas), plus the full spectrum of renewable energy sources.

Also, CAES' research agenda will help educate the next generation of scientists and engineers. It will foster collaborations and interdisciplinary studies and make its research and development facilities, and those of INL, available to a network of universities.

Photo: Arthur Vailas

ISU President Arthur Vailas spoke to the news media, noting how this partnership creates a core resource for energy research and technology development.

For more information on CAES, visit www.caesenergy.org.

[View](#) speakers and other footage from the event. (5.3MB WMV)

[Read](#) the script (44kB PDF)

Photo: Rep. Bill Sali



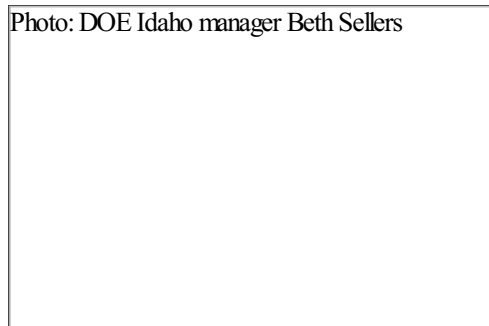
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Photo: DOE Idaho manager Beth Sellers



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Photo: Harold Blackman



CAES is bringing together resources, capabilities and expertise to support the nations transformation to sustainable energy self-reliance, said Harold Blackman, Interim CAES Manager.

Photo: CAES Groundbreaking Ceremony



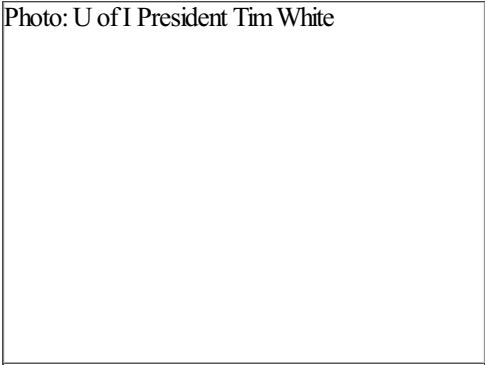
The first shovels of earth were moved for the new facility on Feb. 20, at the CAES Groundbreaking Ceremony.

Photo: John Grossenbacher



This is for them (INL researchers) and our university partners, said John Grossenbacher, INL Director.

Photo: U of I President Tim White



U of I President Tim White participated in the shoveling the earth ceremony and told media that CAES is important to Idaho education and research opportunities.

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